

May 17, 2024

Dear Judge, Gardephe,

I hope this letter finds you well.

I wanted to express my feelings to you about my Uncle Billy. Billy has been much more than just an ordinary uncle to me. Since I was born, he was like a 2<sup>nd</sup> father to me and the father to my 3 closest girl cousins. He is an incredible father to Rosie, Ashley, and Erica. Loving, caring, protective, who always provided a great life for them, and guiding them to a successful and bright future ahead. Whether he is teaching life lessons or explaining to them the importance of having a career and degree one day, Billy always gave the best advice. I remember when I got my driver's license as a child years ago, Billy said to me, "Always remember, a car is a machine, it is not a toy, and it can kill, so please always remember that, with two hands on the wheel." Billy was not only a great father, but an amazing loving and devoted, husband to his wife, Lois, my aunt. Lois and my mom were sisters, but not just typical sisters, best friends, who we're basically glued at the hip and inseparable. Hence, why our families were so close. My parents were incredibly close with Billy, especially my mom. Unfortunately, my mom passed away from Breast Cancer in 2012. Billy and I talk about my mom very often, as they had a very special bond. Billy would've done anything he could to help my mom while she was fighting her battle against cancer for over 13 years. Billy was always her first call in and out of her several doctor appointments, asking him for his advice and guidance. Billy and my mom would talk and look at her scans and test results very often, as Billy was always looking to help my mom find the best care and team of doctors throughout Long Island and New York City. Billy would always try to make as many calls as possible to get my mom into the necessary appointments and would do whatever it took. Billy would do that for any of his family.

Growing up, I was always known as the 4<sup>th</sup> sister and Billy's 4<sup>th</sup> daughter, it was always our joke. We lived a block away from Billy and the Weiner family, and our families we're together constantly; from weekly dinners and BBQ's, family get togethers, holidays, carpools, playdates, sleepovers, vacations and more. We went on yearly cruises with the Weiner family and shared a cabana every summer in Atlantic Beach together. July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks and dinners on the beach are memories I will hold onto with me forever.

As I got older, Billy has continued to be there for me; through the good and the hard times I have had in my life. When my mom passed away, I was a Junior in college at the time. I decided to take a semester off to stay home with my family on Long Island. As I was the oldest child in my family, I wanted to be there for my dad and younger siblings and help in any way I could, being together as a family unit as this was an extremely difficult time in all our lives. I took on the responsibility of doing the food shopping for my family, helping my brother and sister with their daily routine, getting them to and from school, preparing dinner, and taking on the "mother role," as best as I could at the age of 20. At the same time, I was juggling, college courses online to try to graduate on time, as I knew that is what my mom would've wanted. I had a lot on my plate at the time and was grieving the loss of my mom, as my mom and I were tremendously close. My uncle Billy told me, one day it would all pay off, hard work always pays off in the end, it just

may take some time to get to the finish line. He always told me how proud my mom would be of me. Billy continuously told me stories of how many years of school it took him, number of courses, and hours of studying for him to get him through his medical boards, but, in the end, was all worth it. Billy has instilled in me several important key and fundamental values in life. Most importantly, he has taught me that family is forever, and hard work pays off. I continue to value his words of advice and so lucky to have him as an uncle to look up too. I know my mom is incredibly proud of the person Billy is today and she is smiling down.

Thank you very much for your time and considering this letter in your decision.

Best regards,

Rochelle Partman